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THE NINETIES AND BEYOND

An Individual Study Project
Intended for Publication

by

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America is faced with the exciting prospect of existing in a world environment without the offensive threat of Soviet conventional warfighting dominance. While many military professionals are deeply concerned that the nation is reacting to political hyperbole, the Congress is preparing to dismantle the fighting machine we now have and spend the money elsewhere. The military must understand this historic national proclivity to eliminate standing forces after a war has been won (the Cold War), and develop reasonable force structure proposals for our civilian leaders to consider and then, hopefully, to fund. Two such proposals are offered: One for the Nineties and one for the 21st Century. Key to the analysis is forecasting the threat environment so that each can be countered while maintaining a proper mix of active and reserve forces. The drawdown is inevitable, as Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union itself move to greater democratization. It is for military professionals to propose an appropriate array of forces to counter current and future threats so that America maintains the ability to operate freely in the international community.



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INTRODUCTION

The Army's Chief of Staff, General Carl E. Vuono, has enunciated six fundamental imperatives to guide our service as we undergo significant strength reduction. Unfortunately, the force structure imperative and its explanation are not sufficiently specific.¹ Generalities lead to cross purposes and misunderstandings, neither of which America can now afford. In this paper, I offer specific structure recommendations which Congress and the American people can understand and support. This proposal takes advantage of the worldwide rise of democracy, but also insures our national survival if regression occurs.

Learning in such a process can come from many sources. One of the best may be from our prospective adversaries themselves. General Secretary Gorbachev's plan for Perestroika was driven by the necessities of a failed economy and the political awakenings of a disadvantaged people. The inefficiencies of a planned economy and financial support of numerous client states brought the Russian revolution to its knees. Or did it? Are we witnessing the end of the Marxist experiment or only another convulsion along the dialectical path to the perfect socialist state? The General Secretary did not sell Perestroika to the Politburo as a means for dismantling the Marxist/Leninist state. He did not sell a 500,000 man reduction in armed forces to the Defense Ministry by

extolling the benefits of a weak military. On the contrary, he defined a virtuous end-state for this strategy--one which met unaltered national objectives of the Soviet Union--i.e., a dismantled NATO alliance, a nuclear-free Europe and a Soviet armed force more lethal than ever before. All of this is to be achieved while diverting rubles from the economically debilitating military build-up, which began with Krushev's humiliation by Kennedy over the Cuban missile deployment effort in 1963. The outward indications of evolving freedoms for Eastern Europe, though unavoidable, are thus byproducts and trappings to achieve the end-state of a stronger Soviet Union. Indeed Gorbachev's success is so pervasive that the Western alliance is scrambling to help fund the effort, diverting billions to prop up the still-communist governments of Eastern Europe while well-meaning American military clergymen pray weekly for the success of his efforts!

In some cases, key changes in Soviet rhetoric seem to be matched by actions. When those actions are in our interest, we should support them.² For example, their unilateral withdrawal of troops from Eastern Europe, and their application of a standard of "reasonable sufficiency" during arms reductions talks, are actions, and not rhetoric, and should be supported. We, however, must not be stampeded into premature disarmament by the unsupported rhetoric. We must maintain the concepts of political realism which brought us this far, rather than revert to utopianism based on an adversary's false promises.³

CURRENT STRATEGY

The Soviet national objectives listed above have not changed since 1953; similarly, as we observe the temporarily chaotic political environment which engulfs Soviet dominated Europe, America must not deviate from her own national objectives. We must adopt the jujitsu concept of using the enemy's momentum to bring about his defeat.

Unfortunately, it seems America's leadership has not and will not be able to enunciate to the American people the true Soviet intent. Rather it appears that we will be drawn into the trap of not only politically supporting the dialectical spasm but also of economically subsidizing the effort. The Politburo must be surprised and pleased at our naiveté as we fail to consolidate our hard won gains financed by forty years of sacrifice and deficit spending. To observe the Western Democracies now joining in a long delayed "Marshall Plan" for Eastern Europe must be a great satisfaction to them. America's objective since World War II toward the Soviet Union has been to contain and defeat Communism replacing it with democratic values and free market economies. We must never waiver from that goal. Until each Eastern European nation has completely repudiated its current economic and political form, it must receive no financial aid from the West.

French Prime Minister François Mitterand has proposed

such a concept, offering Western support proportional to the extent of political democratization and conversion to free market economy in each Eastern European nation. Such a position squares with America's national goal--survival as a free and independent nation with values and institutions intact.⁴

Derived from this objective statement, America's leadership has developed a national military strategy and a military doctrine to execute the strategy. That strategy has been forward defense and flexible response--thus containing the Soviet's expansionism in Europe and elsewhere.

President Bush has now essentially eliminated the containment concept in favor of supporting whatever initiatives President Gorbachev offers. He may be taking this action prematurely. Should we be helping Gorbachev develop a new Warsaw Treaty Organization (WTO), or should we be trying to insure its total demise forever?

It is appropriate for the defense establishment--indeed for America as a whole--to proudly take credit for the seeming dissolution of Communism as the long awaited result of pursuing the containment strategy. Our withdrawal from Vietnam the nation could not live up to President Kennedy's inaugural hyperbole to "Pay any price, bear any burden...."--but the containment essentially worked. It forced the Soviets to spend over 25 per cent of their GNP to counterbalance the threat that we posed. That threat was

achieved by an expenditure of no more than a six to seven per cent of GNP by the U.S. and normally less from our allies. Indeed the Western encirclement led to such paranoid spending and heightened readiness, that the Soviets simply ruined any chance for their planned economy to produce sufficient consumer goods. The resultant dissatisfaction of a long suffering people in Eastern Europe led to today's happy circumstances. To abandon that approach before the Soviet Union is forced to change its own governmental form, adopting one which reflects Western values, is unwise.

The overarching military doctrinal expression of that containment strategy has variously been known as Active Defense, AirLand Battle or AirLand Battle Future. The current doctrine is aggressive and recognizes the need to engage the enemy second echelon.⁵ Because of this doctrine and our apparent capability to execute it, the Soviets doubted their own capability to overrun Europe. This doctrine promised that early use of nuclear weapons would engage Soviet forces while they were still in their own territories--a use assuring significant collateral damage to the Motherland. The Soviets recently discovered that AirLand Battle exercises discarded restoration of the inter-German border, as the intended goal. NATO exercises began assessing bridging needs into East Germany, Poland and Byelorussia. These events brought home the reality that no matter how much they spent, they could not develop the force

ratios their military art requires in order to defeat NATO's available forces.

CURRENT STRUCTURE

To implement AirLand Battle, the U.S. Army annually developed a description of the minimum force needed to meet the threat. While the Soviets were funding a force with maximum capability, the American view was to develop a force constrained to accept maximum risk. What that really meant to the Army was to maximize whatever manning, weapon systems, and force structure that Congress would fund. The rest of the reality lay in the need to distribute Defense expenditures in the home states of America's most influential Congressmen. The plus side was that, when so distributed, the probability of keeping programs funded in a period of rising defense expenditures was high. But in a period of constrained budgets, as we now find ourselves, it is difficult to stop the least needed system or close the least needed post. It is evidently very hard for a Congressman to push away from a pork barrel.

Programs, bases, and manpower may be acceptable when cut in the general sense, but when specific reductions are brought forward, they are rarely accepted without tradeoffs. Only by hogtying themselves beforehand, as done when they selected an independent commission to develop recommendations, can Congressmen be expected to cut their

district's portion of the defense outlay. As Les Aspin said recently, "Reductions are being driven by budget constraints rather than by policy decisions. If military strategy and doctrine is not altered to reflect a smaller force, a 'Pork Strategy' will be pieced together by Congress that protects politically popular programs."⁶

The Army force structure is now distributed between the active, National Guard, and Army Reserve on a ratio of 50, 30, and 20 percent respectively. The Army is far more dependent upon its reserve components than the Navy or Air Force, which have about 20 and 26 percent respectively in reserve components.⁷ The Army's 50-50 proportion active/reserve was crafted by Department of Defense leadership after the Vietnam conflict. The goal was to insure the national will would have to be motivated in support of warmaking before sustainable military forces could be deployed.

Army active and National Guard forces provide most of the Nation's ground combat power while the Army Reserve provides the sustaining combat support and service support. The active force is capable of small-unit, short-term deployments without reserve support. But as shown by the 17,000-man incursion into Panama, only by employing dozens of Air Force Reserve airlift and refueling units could power projection with large numbers of forces be accomplished.

As the active duty strength reductions took hold after Vietnam, it was decided that the Armed Forces could best

maintain combat effectiveness by using civilians to execute peacetime only missions. The concept did not originate in the 1970s of course. Contractors were used in our pre-revolutionary days, but the concept's utility was certainly expanded and has since become pervasive. Other strategies--such as creating two additional divisional flags (the 10th and the 6th) without increasing active duty end strength--were accomplished by further pushing combat support and service support elements out of division and corps-sized units, and by replacing active brigades with reserve units (roundout) of like size.

The promise that civilian authorizations and automation would be forthcoming became vogue under the euphemism, "Army of Excellence." That term was soon renamed "Army of Emptiness" by those who served in it. Unfortunately neither the civilian manpower spaces nor the needed automation was fully funded.

Since the deterrence strategy seemed to call for eighteen active divisions to do the fighting and since resourcing failed to keep pace with need, the replacement of active brigades by reserve brigades in active divisions was continued. Thus, an active duty brigade, constituting one-fourth to one-third of the division's total maneuver combat power was replaced with a less costly reserve brigade. The division was still considered to be fully capable to meet its doctrinal commitments but many senior leaders question that a part time infantryman or tanker can

be trained to the same level in 38 days a year as can a full time soldier. Lost in the equation was also the fact that the remaining active officers and soldiers were responsible for training and evaluating the newly acquired "sister" brigade. The problem is worsened by the fact that the roundout unit is occasionally located two or three states away and that their wartime mobilization site is often not collocated with their parent active unit.

From the mid-'70s to 1989 this structure served the purpose of appearing to meet the strategy and doctrine defined above. It also retained the advantage of meeting congressional needs for distribution of pork. For the Army alone, that meant 206 stateside installations and properties.⁸

The resulting active duty fighting structure consists of eighteen divisions: one airborne, one air assault, four armored, one motorized, six mechanized, one infantry and four light. Nine additional brigades round out the "tooth." Keep in mind: Many of the divisions have only two active maneuver brigades and some of the brigades--separate or divisional--have only two active maneuver battalions.

The "tooth" in the reserve force is mostly found in the National Guard. The Guard includes two armored divisions, five infantry divisions, two mechanized divisions, and one light division. In addition, twenty assorted brigade sized combat units, four active and four reserve special forces groups and an active ranger regiment are distributed around the United States.⁹

Many of the 206 Army stateside locations, plus the 267 overseas, require significant support infrastructure which must exist simply because Army soldiers or civilians are there. Economies of scale seem not to be the issue. Dispersal in defense of nuclear attack may be a reason for keeping bases open, but Congressional intransigence to close bases even when uneconomical is a better guess.

STRUCTURE FOR THE NINETIES

The force defined above is simply not now maintainable for a number of reasons. Notwithstanding my opening complaints about the possible abandonment of America's longstanding goal to eliminate totalitarianism from the globe, we, as a nation are not able to maintain the pressure that forced the Soviets into their current posture. If a redefined Marxism in Russia can discard the inevitability of the military clash between communists and capitalists brought on by the ever increasing depth of the business cycle, then long term stability may be in the offing.¹⁰ If asymmetrical force reductions result in parity at all levels, then lowering NATO's immediate response capability is valid.

THE NINETIES

America and its NATO allies must plan a new military

strategy and doctrine. I propose a two-step approach: The initial strategy need change very little from our current position. First, Presidential policy must be clearly stated and supported within Congress. That policy should support a military strategy of forward presence instead of forward defense, and maintain the concept of flexible response. Just as ACE (Army Central Europe) Mobile Force Land, containing small units from each NATO country shows alliance solidarity, so a corps-sized force stationed in Europe would demonstrate American commitment to stability in the region. A second stateside armored corps should be maintained and earmarked for immediate reinforcement to this theatre, with a secondary contingency mission to the Middle East or North Africa. Forward storage of equipment in Europe at the highest levels negotiable with the Soviets is preferred. Perhaps adopting the Soviet practice of storing most of the go-to-war equipment while training on only a small portion, would aid the always severe maintenance requirement. Since new equipment will be less available, based on the closure of the M1 line and similar actions, these forward deployed forces should be equipped with the lowest mileage and most lethal equipment research and development can provide.

A third active duty corps should be developed stateside to execute the special operations mission. Airborne, airmobile and light division sized forces should be included, practicing in peace the various command lines they may use in war. The recent incursion into Panama helps

define the needs of such units, including light, lethal tanks--which, unfortunately, we do not currently possess. The Sheridan, used in Panama, is one or two generations behind those available to prospective enemies elsewhere in the world. Maintaining such a corps with three to five active divisions plus the airlift and fast sealift to deploy it--would significantly improve our capability to constrain Third World and Soviet threats. The concept of prepositioned equipment is useful here as well. Large capacity ships--such as phased-out carriers--would provide the space and flexibility to support quick deployments. A floating POMCUS (Preposition of Equipment Configured to Unit Sets) in the Caribbean and one in the Indian Ocean would seem appropriate.

America's fourth corps would be based in the U. S. facing the Pacific basin. Its essentially light forces should also have prepositioned stores of ammo and fuel in the Far East, much as the Soviets now have in Eastern Europe. Whether stored on land or, again, in a floating configuration--this would, barring an enemy preemptive strike, reduce deployability time and lift requirements.

All corps units should be garrisoned in as close a proximity to each other as possible. Each active stateside division should be brought to full strength, not diluted with roundout combat units. Resource-inefficient bases, such as those being built for the 6th and 10th Divisions, should be closed with the active manpower diverted to fill remaining units.

The resultant active fighting force would thus be reduced in Europe by one armored and one mechanized division as well as one infantry brigade and one armored brigade. In CONUS (continental United States), the flags of the 6th and the 10th Divisions, plus those of the 4th Mechanized Division and the 1st Infantry Division, would be eliminated. The remaining fighting units would be full-up, located relatively near the coasts, and oriented East, South and West. Table of distribution and allowance (TDA) units should be similarly constrained in number, constantly seeking economies of scale. Fort Bliss and Fort McClellan could close, Fort Knox's armor training function could relocate to Fort Hood, and basic training could all be accomplished in two locations--Fort Jackson and Fort Leonard Wood. Basic training throughput would have to be stabilized throughout the training year to maximize use of instructors and training space. Current volunteer accession strategies preclude this, but national service programs may open a way for it to work. Also to maximize instructor usage, advanced individual training (AIT) would again replace one station unit training (OSUT) and be taught at the traditional schools--except at Fort Knox, as noted above.

The reserve family would be reduced somewhat and given some new roles. Longer warning times associated with Soviet attack options, brought about by force parity in Europe, would allow reserve units--especially those eliminated from the roundout role--to train at a lesser level of readiness.

This would allow the active component units, now dedicating significant resources to the reserve training mission, to concentrate on their own readiness. Reserve combat units would embark on a whole new series of stateside missions, including drug suppression and public works projects. Outside of the United States, their key new mission would be nation-building. The mix of heavy, light, and special operation forces in the remaining reserve divisions would be shifted in favor of special operations. Facilities would be mothballed and maintained for mobilization needs.

The key for money saving would again be to achieve economies of scale at every turn. It means, at some small posts, elimination of small cadres of soldiers which beget an infrastructure of personnel and community activity support. Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) installations, for example, currently continue to man administrative offices with a mix of soldiers and civilians. Each of these operations could be fully civilianized, while the remaining soldier positions could be transferred to provide TDA support at Forces Command (FORSCOM) installations where similar occupational specialties exist in the table of organization and equipment (TOE) units. The ability for these soldiers to transfer between the TDA and the TOE at these FORSCOM posts would lengthen time between permanent changes of station and still maximize the promotion opportunity and cross-training available to the troops. "Green-suiter" support functions could then be

concentrated at these posts with comparative or greater reductions at TRADOC and other non-deploying installations.

THE LONGER TERM VISION

Developing force structure concepts for the year 2000 and beyond is dicey work. There is no reason to believe that America's national interests will have changed greatly. America will, for any foreseeable term, still be committed to achieving a healthy, growing economy and a stable secure world, devoid of totalitarian regimes. Strong alliances--though most will be bilateral and based on economics rather than military--will still be important. Human rights, democratic institutions, and free market economies will remain our highest goals.

Two recently published futurists provide excellent ideas on how force structure could be configured. Robert L. Pfaltzgraff Jr., stated that, "Derived again from our national interests, our basic military strategy should have as its objective, to deter war, to control escalation in wars that do start, and to terminate such wars on terms favorable to the United States and her allies. Thus, to the extent that our vital interests are threatened, we will seek to deter the outbreak of war, but we must maintain the ability to fight and win when necessary."¹¹ Colonel David Shaver of the Strategic Studies Institute, Army War College, provides excellent paradigms for considerations of future

force designs.¹² His credibility was established when he was among the few to predict the significant changes in Eastern Europe nine months before they occurred.

Unfortunately neither of these futurists has gone far enough nor been specific enough. Events are moving so quickly, not only in Europe but throughout the Third World, that a paradigm must be enunciated that few have dared to project. This author sees the following images:

Europe first. Capabilities of the Soviet Union to project conventional forces into Western Europe and achieve the force ratios necessary to break through will no longer be possible. Non-Soviet Warsaw Pact (NSWSP) nations will no longer be counted on to contribute their 20 percent of the WTO's first and second echelon's combat power nor their 50 percent of the fuel, maintenance, and ammunition needed for operations against Western Europe. NSWSP forces will contest the movement of Soviet units through their countries.

President Gorbachev may have achieved the dissolution of NATO, but the costs will certainly be high. They include the elimination of the Warsaw Pact as well as the inability of the Soviets alone to generate appropriate attack forces in the central region before Western Europe can recall their reserves.

The vacuum left by NATO's demise as a military force will be filled by a third bloc--neither Eastern nor Western, but European. The coalescing factor will be the economic

ties generated by European Community (EC) 92. These EC 92 nations will develop their own alliance, based upon their economic defense against Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and the United States. Conventional defense of Europe will again be in European hands as they move to the status of an armed bloc, equal in conventional military power to the U.S. or the Soviet Union. Their condition will be improved by inclusion of the former Soviet satellites into the Western European sphere of influence. The result will also mean the movement of the current forward edge of the battle area 600 miles to the East. Offensive capabilities of the new bloc will be very low, but the lethality of guided conventional munitions will render armored or robotic attack against them unthinkable. Defensive alternatives will be adopted which eliminate nuclear targets, yet insure an effective defense without giving up precious territory.¹³ Nuclear weapons will be eliminated in the Atlantic to the Urals region with the exception of a French/British force. Military burden-sharing in the new European bloc, so long a problem in the NATO alliance, will follow the economic capabilities of the partners as defined within EC 92. American forward presence would diminish to air forces and prepositioned ground combat equipment and supplies. A strategic nuclear umbrella would continue to be provided by the U.S.

The threat shrinkage in Europe results in a longer lead time before a Soviet attack could occur. Thus with equitable burden-sharing of conventional defense within the

European bloc, American armored forces should be reduced to no more than a single active duty corps, stationed stateside with three divisions of similar configuration in the reserves.

In the Third World, the threat unfortunately will continue to grow. Have-not nations will expend considerable portions of their GNP on military hardware to develop regional hegemony. Rather than buying their equipment from either of the three blocs, they will buy the technology and build their own equipment, to include weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems. Israel, South Africa, Libya, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Pakistan, India, Brazil, Argentina, and others will possess nuclear weapons. They and others will also possess significant chemical and biological weaponry. It is in these nations that America, Europe, and the Soviet Union will find the greatest threat, not to their own national survival, but to world peace and stability.

The response will be development of a North-South orientation replacing the current East-West. Burden-sharing may bring on new meaning--as for example, the Soviet Union provides airlift for American units to quell the possible breakout of nuclear war in South America. Soviet Speznatz forces could similarly be delivered by American submarines to eliminate a south-Asian nuclear missile launch facility being used to threaten a regional enemy.

This environment will argue for one American corps of

airborne/airmobile forces with the air and sea lift support to transport them anywhere in the world. The need for experience in joint operations will be eclipsed by the need for expertise in combined operations. This force should be backed up by light divisions and special operations forces in the Army Reserve. Both the active and reserve units would spend much of their training time in nation building, training of foreign defense forces, and in fighting narcotics wars throughout the world. Prevention of Third World conflicts would be of paramount importance, with combined Soviet and American teams working to eliminate the causes--the economic imbalance--and inculcating democratic/free market value systems wherever their combined teams deployed. It is only through the alignment of basic values among the current East-West adversaries that stability would be insured. Ethnic and religious rivalries would not be eliminated, but Northern solidarity in combating these flare-ups would go far in settling them.

The remaining threat to stability lies in East and Northeast Asia. The Soviets will reposition much of their combat power to orient on these theatres. China's growing population and their need for arable land, coupled with the intransigence of the North Koreans will cause continuing instability. Again, it will be through cooperation of the Soviet Union and the United States that these nations will be held in check. Japan will improve her own self defense capability with force projection to a 2000 mile radius.

Though this capability will still be defensive in nature, North Korea will especially feel the presence. While a united Korea cannot be projected, inroads in that direction may be made when Kim Il Sung gives up North Korean leadership. (The first proof will probably be when North Korean students, dressed in stone-washed Levis made in Japan, escape, for political reasons, to Russia!)

America's third active corps should remain targeted to this threat. Units should be stationed on the West Coast and in Hawaii. The 2nd Infantry Division will be withdrawn from Korea in light of South Korea's growing capability in conjunction with Japan to defend their region from North Korean invasion.

The resultant long-term force structure reveals a much smaller army than we currently have. Probably no more than 500,000 soldiers would be left on active duty. The remaining units will be heavy in high-tech equipment, but light in staying power. They will be mobile, with improved sea and air transport, and rely on prepositioned supplies where possible. The three corps will be maintained stateside with three divisions in each. Active war fighting posts comprising the Eastern corps will be located at Fort Bragg, Fort Stewart, and Fort Campbell. The Southern Corps will have units stationed at Fort Hood, and Fort Polk. The Western Corps will remain headquartered at Fort Lewis with two divisions plus one division in Hawaii. Active duty basic training would be conducted at the combat posts with

the Army reverting to its previously used training system whereby new soldiers are brought directly into the units where they will serve. Three-brigade active divisions will be augmented with additional training NCO's who will help accomplish the basic training and advanced individual training function. This approach will allow mothballing of many TRADOC posts and elimination of their costly support staffs.

The National Guard would be likewise constrained, with combat forces earmarked to reinforce each of the three active corps. Their roles in nation building in the Third World would constitute America's most forward deployed force in the highest threat theaters. Guard units under state command would assist directly in the war on drugs through surveillance, apprehension, and training.

The Army Reserve would continue as America's sustaining base. Units would be activated under new call-up procedures to provide specific support elements needed for contingency operations. Both the Guard and Reserve will be required to train their own new accessions, reinforced by active army trainers.

Money saved from these reductions would be channeled to research and development programs which would maintain America's leadership in high-tech systems. For example, the Strategic Defense Initiative would continue to be funded, providing protection against any nation's nuclear or chemical delivery systems. Economic assistance,

construction of public works, and medical assistance should be the product exported by the American military to nations around the world.

Throughout the tremendous period of upheaval we face, let us not stray from the principles recently laid down by our Secretary of Defense, Mr. Richard Cheney: "The United States must ensure that its enduring strengths are aligned against enduring Soviet (read 'any potential enemy') weaknesses. To accomplish this goal, the United States must identify key technologies, weapon systems, and operational concepts that are most likely to maximize the deterrent effect of increasingly constrained resources the U.S. devotes to the national defense. This approach, known as competitive strategies, maximizes the effectiveness of U.S. defenses and provides a hedge against any potential future failure of the cooperative aspects of U.S. relations."¹⁴

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